

In this particular passage he uses a familiar Jewish form of thought, that of a thousand years' reign of the Messiah in Palestine, in order to paint in the richest colors an ideal picture of the blessedness of God's people in the complete triumph of Christ and His Church over all opposing forces. A thousand is simply the symbol of completeness.

The loosing of Satan after the thousand years may signify the fact that while ideally, the triumph is already complete, yet, actually, Satan and all the forces of evil are still active and the struggle goes on, until the Lord comes at the end of the world's troubled history. How else, under the visionary form of representation, could such a qualification of the ideal representation of triumph be introduced and made vivid? I repeat that notes of sequences of time count for little in dreams or visions. One kaleidoscopic picture here represents Satan as bound; the next turn of the kaleidoscope shows him at liberty and at work; there is no chronological sequence; the two representations are synchronous. John is not, then, giving us here a forecast of an actual period of history lasting for a thousand years.

With this interpretation we escape from the interminable disputes of premillennialists and postmillennialists, harmonize the New Testament with itself, and see the whole early Church looking hopefully forward to the speedy coming of the Lord. Their error as to the *time* does not discredit the substance of their hope, for times and seasons are the very point on which we might expect rashness, and in regard to which their Lord Himself warned them of precipitate judgment. The faith and hope